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TRUTH *and* LOVE.

A
DISCOURSE

FROM

Ephesians iv. 15.

AT THE

MERCHANTS-LECTURE,

AT

SALTERS-HALL,

November 29. 1720.

By EDMUND CALAMY, D. D.

L O N D O N,

Printed for JOHN CLARK *at the Bible and*
Crown in the Poultry, near Cheapside.
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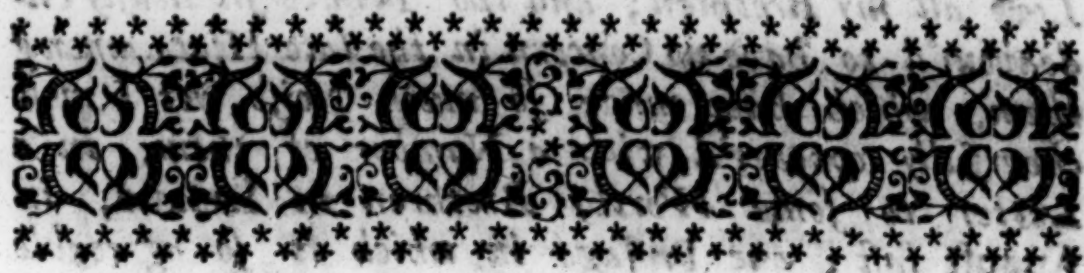
November 29. 1750.

By EDMUND CALAMY, D.D.

LONDON,

Printed for JOHN CLARK at the Bible and
Crown in the Strand, near Chancery

1750.



T H E P R E F A C E.



I *t is well known in and about this City, that for Two Years past, I have been Preaching on the Doctrine of the TRINITY, and endeavouring to open, clear, and vindicate the several Texts of Scripture in which it is asserted and illustrated, in as Publick a Lecture as any we have among us. It need not I think be surprizing to any, that I should take a little Time to revise these Discourses, before I send them to the Press, for which I from the first design'd them.*

IF I had not been perswaded that I had Reason to hope, there were some good Ends might be answer'd, by publishing this which was the last of them all, before the rest, I had forborn it. If I should therein prove mistaken, I have shewn my Goodwill, and the Damage is not great. But if the Cause of Love, which I must own is (and I hope ever will be) as dear to me as that of Truth, be but thereby promoted, I shall think it well worth my while. The World seems sick of angry Reflections, and to me it appears no unpromising Symptom that they are so. For this Reason, as well as because of my own Aversion to any Thing of that Nature, I have carefully avoid-

ed what I thought might or could disgust. I heartily Love all my Brethren; and tho' I have studiously endeavour'd to have no Concern in the late Heats among them, which have made so much Noise, yet I most cheerfully concurr'd with a Number of them, in a Letter to some Worthy Brethren in Ireland, in August last; one Passage in which is so agreeable to the Purport of the Discourse now publish'd, that I think it may not be amiss to transcribe it here. It was in these Words:

“ FOR our Part, tho' we must leave it to particular Persons to answer for their own Conduct, yet we hope we can truly say, that the Zeal that has appear'd among us, for strict Orthodoxy on one Hand, and Christian Liberty on the other, has not occasion'd so great a Distance, but that while on each Hand we have done what we thought was most for the Common Interest, we have heartily wish'd well to those of different Sentiments, and are still dispos'd to promote each others Usefulness. For it is our aim, according to St. Paul's Direction and Example, as far as we have already attain'd, to walk by the same Rule; and mind the same Things; and if in any Thing any Brethren are otherwise minded, we live in hope that God shall reveal even this unto them.

MAY the GOD of Truth, and Peace, and Love, cherish and strengthen, improve and spread this Temper, and let all the People say, Amen.





EPHES. iv. 15.

— Speaking the Truth in Love.



T. Paul the Apostle was a great Admirer of Peace and Love, as well as of Truth. Next to Gospel-Holiness, I know of no one Thing which he more studiously inculcates upon all Occasions, than the *keeping of the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace.* This he earnestly recommends in the beginning of this Chapter, jointly with *Lowliness, and Meekness, Long-suffering, and a loving Forbearance.* And having once touch'd on the Subject, 'twas not easy to him to divert. He goes on to take Notice of a sevenfold Unity, which one would think might be sufficient to keep all Christians close together, and engage them to love one another. *There is, says he, one Body, Ver. 4, 5. and one Spirit, one Hope of our Calling, one Lord, 6. one Faith, one Baptism, and one God and Father of all.* How then can Christians be any other than

at Unity among themselves ! We may safely say, they could not fail of this, if their Practices did but answer their Principles. He afterwards fastens particularly upon *the Unity of the Faith*. This he represents as the End and Design of the Institution and Continuance of a Gospel Ministry, and one of the most proper Means of promoting that Steadiness that should be aim'd at, by all that have any Value for the Credit of Religion, or their own Peace. And then follows the Clause I propose to take into Consideration ; in which a Motion is made, which considering from whom it comes, ought to have the Force of a Command with us, about *speaking the Truth in Love*, which instead of at all weakning, or flurring, would by Experience be found, to add not a little to the Strength and Beauty of that Truth, which it must be own'd, has an heavenly Rise and Original.

It has been the Opinion of some, that it was the Intention of the Apostle by this Motion of his, to recommend Sincerity ; and to stir up, where we pretend Love and Affection, to take Care that *it be without Dissimulation*, as he elsewhere admonishes : And not to love *in Word, or Tongue only, but in Deed and in Truth*, as another Apostle has express'd it. But the Connexion points us here to Doctrinal Truth, in which it is a most desirable Thing we should all be so settled, as not to be liable to be toss'd about with every Suggestion as a puff of Wind, or shaken with every blast from such as fall into Mistakes themselves, and sometimes *lie in wait to deceive their Neighbours*. And in this Sense, Love will much rather be an Help than an Hindrance to us. The more careful we are to join *Truth and Love* together,

the

TRUTH *and* LOVE.

87

the firmer will be our Settlement, and the more remarkable our Growth; the more Honour will Almighty God have from us, and the more shall we credit our Holy Profession.

So that it may not be improper, for us here distinctly to consider,

I. THE *Truth* we are to settle in, *Speak*, and adhere to;

II. THE *Love* in which we are to *Speak* this *Truth*;

III. THE Motives that should make us careful to maintain this *Love*; and,

IV. THE Consistency of hearty *Love*, with that Zeal for *Truth*, which is elsewhere recommended as our Duty.

I. I begin with that *Truth* which we are to settle in, *Speak*, and adhere to: As to which, Thanks be to God, we have no Reason to complain we are left in Uncertainty. We have a sufficient Directory, and know where to find it. *Pilate* in a bantering Way, enquir'd *what is Truth*? He ask'd it of One Joh. xviii. 38. that was very able to answer his Question; but he did not stay for an Answer: Which shew'd, either that he was very indifferent about it, or too much in haste; or else thought it a vain Thing to search after it. But *Truth* in Reality is a most noble Thing. It is well worth waiting and taking Pains for, and searching after with great Diligence; and it will amply Reward our Pains if we do but

Ver. 37.

find it. It was the great End of CHRIST in coming into the World to *bear Witness unto it*, and make it known: And it is the main Design of Revelation to set it before us, and communicate it to us with Advantage. The Apostles of

Acts xxvi.
25.

our Blessed SAVIOUR *spoke forth the Words of Truth*. What they deliver'd to the World for Truth, was communicated to them from above; and they made a faithful Report. Without all doubt it is *reveal'd Truth* that is here intended, which goes much farther in Divine Things than the meer Light of Nature could ever have carry'd us. It comprehends the Essentials of Christianity, and particularly, that Doctrine concerning the one SPIRIT, one LORD, and one GOD, that is taken Notice of in the beginning of this Chapter, upon which Doctrine I have given you so many Discourses, in the Course of this Lecture. Common Truth is valuable in its Place, and deserves Esteem: But we are here pointed to the *Truth as it is in Jesus*. From him it came, and in him it centers. In the grand Concern of Religion, we have not to do with Truth of Man's devising, but of GOD's discovering; for he is the GOD of Truth.

Ver. 21.

THIS Truth, we are first to receive and learn, and then to speak and publish, declare and propagate. We are to receive it as it is deliver'd, and speak it as it is communicated: And the nearer we keep to the Terms in which it is deliver'd, we are so much the safer. Having it committed to us, we should reckon it a great Trust: And it highly concerns not only Ministers, but all the People of GOD to be found *Faithful*. We should keep it entire without changing or altering it; *holding fast the Firm of sound Words*.

2 Tim. ii.
2.
2 Tim. i.
13.

We

We are firmly to adhere to it, whoever slight it, to stand up for it whenever it is assaulted or oppos'd, and as far as we are able to clear it when it is obscur'd. We are not to part with it, or let it go at any Rate. We must keep the Truth of CHRIST'S Doctrine just as it was deliver'd to the Church by his Apostles, and as it is contain'd in the sacred Records, from whence (rather than from humane Glosses, Comments, and Expositions, how just and valuable soever) we are to take and collect it for our own Use. We must adhere to it, whatever we may suffer, and whatever our so doing may expose us to. And if we corrupt or misrepresent it, betray or lose it upon any Terms, we are accountable to the Judge of all another Day.

THE more valuable we find this Gospel-Truth to be, the more Reason shall we discern we have to be very thankful, that such distinct Discoveries are made of it to us, as well as to those who immediately sat under the Preaching of CHRIST and his Apostles : And that it has been handed down to us attended with such an Evidence of its Divinity, and in so great Purity, and such a Freedom from adulterating Mixtures. We should count it a mighty Happiness, that in the most Capital Matters we are not left in any distracting Uncertainty, but have Light sufficient to guide us in our Affections and Motions. This is a Privilege that it becomes us highly to prize, and carefully to Improve. 'Tis this Truth that is the Treasure hid in the Field ; the Pearl of great Price, which cannot be bought too dear. We should in all proper Ways express our Value for it, and take care to walk answerably. We should dread the Thoughts of *holding it in Unrighteousness*.

Mat. xiii.
44, 45.

Rom. i.
18.

And next to that, I know of no one Thing of which we have more Reason to be fearful, than the holding it in Uncharitableness: From which that we may be preserv'd, let us,

II. IN the second Place consider the *Love* in which we are to *speak* this *Truth*, or with which our Adherence to it should be accompany'd. It highly becomes us, and much concerns us to *speak the Truth in Love*. We should do it in such a Way as may testify and express both our Love to GOD, and our Fellow-Creatures.

1 Cor.
viii. 3.

WE are to hold Gospel-Truth in the Love of GOD, remembering that it is the natural and avowed Design of it, to inflame and maintain the Love of GOD in our Hearts, without which 'tis altogether incapable of doing us Service. And it should herein quicken our Care, that we are so expressly told, *That if any Man love God, the same is known of Him: i. e.* so known of Him, as to be approv'd by Him.

WE are also to hold Gospel-Truth in the Love of our Fellow-Creatures; and that both those of them that know and own the same Truth jointly with us, and those that either know it not, or know and own it but in part; that demur about it, and cannot be prevail'd with to join with us in adhering to, and defending it; or that differ from us as to the proper Ways and Methods of supporting it.

ALL agree, That we are in Duty bound, to hold and adhere to the Truth of the Gospel, in the Love of such Brethren as hold the same Truth jointly with us, and intirely concur therein. Our Blessed SAVIOUR is so positive in his Declaration,

By

By this shall all Men know that ye are my Disciples, John xiii. 35. if ye have love one to another, and hath so directly refer'd to this as a Proof and Evidence that Persons are true Christians, that there is no Room for a Demurr about it, as understood with such a Limitation. And it were well if this was but consider'd as it ought, that we might see Brotherly Love abound more among those who without any discernible Diversity of Sentiments adhere to the same Truth, as it has been deliver'd to the Saints, and that its being express'd in all proper and becoming Ways might fall under a more general Observation.

BUT then, this is far from being all that is requisite, in order to the *fulfilling the Royal Law of Love*. Jam. ii. 9. For there is a Love also that is due to those to whom Gospel-Truth is not made known. Even they that continue in Darkness and Ignorance, ought to be Objects of our Love, on Account of their partaking of the same Nature with us, together with its noble Powers and Capacities. We should esteem any Thing in 'em that is truly valuable, beware of running 'em down, because they have not been so priviledg'd as we; and we ought to love them to that Degree, as to do all that in us lies, in order to their being Sharers in the same Happiness with us, by their coming to the Knowledge of the Truth. This is not a Thing indifferent, but Matter of plain Duty; and I'm afraid there are many that have much to answer for, for their neglecting it.

THERE is also a Love that is due to those who tho' they want not the Means of Knowledge, but have them in common with us, yet are not to be prevail'd with to acknowledge the Truth:

They

They stand off, and demurr about it ; they receive it but in Part, and in Part oppose it. They *turn away their Ears from it* ; nay, they *resist it* : They draw new Schemes different from the Account the Scripture gives of it : And while 'tis they themselves that are guilty of Mistakes, they inveigh against those as erroneous, that adhere to the Truth as it is laid down in the Word of God.

2 Tim. iv.

4.

2 Tim. iii.

8.

AND yet much less are those to be excluded from our Brotherly Love, who firmly adhere to the Substance of the same Truth with us, while yet they may differ about some particular Words, Phrases, and Expressions, which have been commonly us'd by those that have appear'd most zealous in the Defence of it ; or may not be in the same Sentiments as to the Ways and Methods by which this Truth would be best publish'd, supported, and defended.

THERE have been and are some ready to grant, that Love is due to those that adhere to Gospel-Truth, all such being Members of the same Body, that have been and are for pleading against any Obligation to Love such as they apprehend either betray the Truth by weakning it, or openly deny and disown it. But methinks when God has requir'd us to love our very Enemies, it is plain there must be a Love due to the most erroneous, in the most Capital Branches of Reveal'd Truth. If Enemies are not excepted, neither are the erroneous, and mistaken. And our Blessed SAVIOUR by the Parable of the Poor Man who was reliev'd by the Samaritan, upon his finding him in that deplorable Condition, in which he was left by the Thieves in his Way from *Jerusalem* to *Jericho*, teaches us plainly, that every one that in any Re-

Luke x.

spect

spect needs our Regard, or comes within our Reach, is to be look'd upon as our Neighbour, and lov'd accordingly. A *Samaritan* was counted a Heretick by the *Jews*, and yet was commended for his Charity: *Israelites* therefore, who might well be expected to do more than others, could not be excus'd if they were uncharitable; and from Christians, a yet more large and extensive Charity may well be look'd for, than from any that liv'd before them.

W H E N all indeed among those that profess themselves Christians, *Speak the same Things, and there are no Divisions, but Persons are perfectly join'd together in the same Mind, and in the same Judgment,* it is an easy and delightful Thing to love: But tho' it is more difficult to love when there is the Reverse of all this, yet is it not a Jot the less commendable, or the less bound upon us as a Duty. But then the Query will be this, and a necessary Query it is, What Sort of Love is due from us, while we adhere to and stand up for the Truth of the Gospel in the Essentials of Christianity, (and particularly with respect to the Doctrine of the TRINITY) towards such as differ from us in their Sentiments, or Conduct, in some Things in which Truth may appear concern'd; and towards such also as hesitate about the Truth, or even deny and oppose it? And in what Ways our Love to such is to be express'd?

N O W I cannot conceive a better Method to discover how Love should shew itself either in the one, or the other of these Cases, than by having Recourse to that large and distinct Account which St. Paul has given of the genuine Workings of Christian Charity or Love, in one of his Epi-

1 Cor. i.
10.

stles to the *Corinthians*, which will furnish us with an admirable, and I think unexceptionable Answer to the Question propos'd. 'Tis true, there may be certain inforcing Circumstances which may sometimes oblige to heighten Love, and carry it to a farther Pitch, than it can be pretended is necessary in all Cases, without any Variation; but wherever Love is really due, those which the Apostle mentions in his noble Description of this Grace, are the Ways in which it is to be express'd. I'll go over the Description Article by Article. And,

1 Cor.
xiii. 4.

1. THE Apostle after the preferring *Charity* or Love to any Gifts, how excellent soever, says, it *suffereth long*: *μακροθυμει*. Tho' it may consist with being affected with Provocations that have been undeserv'd, it yet inclines to Patience and Equanimity under them. Where Persons therefore act as influenc'd by Christian Love towards those that differ from them about the great Truths of the Gospel, they'l bear with Injuries and Affronts from them, without being hasty to return them. They wont lie upon the Catch to take Advantages against them. Instead of being hasty of Spirit, breathing forth Ruin and Slaughter against Gain-sayers, and with the Disciples presently calling for

Luke ix.
54.

Fire down from Heaven to consume them; they'l wait patiently for their Amendment, give them Time to bethink themselves, try all the Arts and Methods of Kindness and Good-will, and thereby shew they are not inclin'd to push Things to Extremity against 'em. They are able to bear being ill us'd, and the being reckon'd to be *become*

Gal. iv.
16.

Enemies, because they tell the Truth. They'l be ready to put up Wrongs, and *pass over Transgressions*. And tho' some may think this a Weakness

Prov. xix.
11.

in

in them, and a Piece of Stupidity, yet *Solomon* represents it as their *Glory*. They'l not easily conceive a Displeasure against those whom they have to do with. They'l be *slow to Wrath*; and not *Jam. i. 19.* easily offended or incens'd. They will *not strive*, *2 Tim. ii. 24, 25.* *but be gentle unto all Men, apt to teach, patient, in Meekness instructing those that oppose themselves.* And this is a truly noble Instance of Love, and such an Expression of it as is owing to Truth, and the G O D of Truth, and the Dignity of humane Nature.

2. CHARITY, says *St. Paul*, *Is kind.* 'Tis *1 Cor. xiii. 4.* *χρῖς* ; full of Benignity. They therefore that hold the Truth of the Gospel in Love, will shew themselves tractable, affable and courteous. Instead of being soure and fullen, waspish and churlish to such as differ from them, and perhaps oppose and censure them, they'l treat them with Gentleness and Candour : And tho' they wont upon any Account part with the least Article of Truth to gratify them, yet will they carry it so as to manifest, that it is pure Conscience, that therein is their Hindrance. They'l be ready to do them any real Good in all Ways that are within their Reach; and their whole Behaviour towards them will shew that they really wish them well, notwithstanding they are oblig'd to differ from them. They'l remember that they are to *increase and abound in Love*, not only *one towards another*, but *towards all Men*. And therefore will be tender and compassionate, do Good for Evil, and endeavour to *overcome Evil with Good*; which is truly Divine and God-like. They will not be peevish and froward *21.* but gentle. Instead of insulting they truly pity such as wander from the Truth, and heartily pray for them,

them. They perhaps in the mean Time may be so fix'd in their own Notions and Ways, as not to think they need any Compassion, and may be apt to slight the Kindness that is intended to be this Way express'd: But this will not hinder such as *speak the Truth in Love*, from this Way signifying how kindly they are dispos'd towards them. Where they differ from any the most widely, they'll not treat them roughly, or hastily charge them with Fundamental Errors. They will not do it, unless they are forc'd to it, by the highest Evidence of the Truth and Necessity of the Things which have a stress laid upon them, and by plain Scripture.

1 Cor.
xiii. 4.

3. CHARITY says the Apostle, *envieth not*: & ζηλοῖ. He that holds the Truth in Love, grudges not even those that most differ from him any Advantages with which they are favour'd, nor is he in the least disgusted with their Prosperity. He is well pleas'd with the Benefits and Blessings that are conferr'd upon them; and wishes the continuance of them, in Conjunction with Hearts, to make a good use of them. He reckons not their Reputation, Applause and Advancement, to be to his Diminution. And so far is he from a desire of building upon their Ruins, that he takes part in their Happiness; and will rather add to them, than lessen and take from them.

1 Cor.
xiii. 4.

4. ST. Paul adds, That *Charity vaunteth not itself*; & περπερεύεται: and *is not puffed up*; & φυσίται. It is not rash and insolent, haughty and supercilious. They that hold the Truth of GOD in Love, wont be forward to set up themselves as Standards for the rest of Mankind, reckoning themselves slighted or abus'd if their Decisions be not allow'd to pass for Oracles:

Oracles: Nor will they swell in their own Esteem because they are in the right, nor despise others on the account of their being in the wrong. They wont carry it as if they were the only wise Men in the World, and others were bound to take their Notions and Measures from them, and disparag'd them if they did not entirely fall in with them:

But they'l be lowly-minded; set a due Value upon the Abilities of others, and take care *not to think of themselves more highly than they ought to think.* Rom. xii. 3. Col. iii. 12.

They'l *put on Bowels of Mercies, and Humbleness of Mind.* They'l neither magnify themselves, nor run down others with Contempt and Scorn, nor any way give them unnecessary Disturbance, nor desire or seek, to hinder their Usefulness.

5. CHARITY, says the Apostle, *doth not behave itself unseemly; ἐν ἁσχημονεῖ*: It does not run into Indecencies, either in Language or Carriage. They that *speake the Truth in Love*, when they are oppos'd, will not break out into injurious Reflections, or unbecoming Passions. They'l carefully avoid Rudeness, and contumelious Behaviour, abusive Language, and disgraceful Treatment, of those for whose Sentiments they have the greatest Aversion. They'l debate Matters coolly, and reason calmly, and more consider what is spoken, than who is the Speaker. They'l closely *think of, and study whatsoever Things are lovely.* They wont disgrace the Persons of those whose Sentiments they most dislike. And tho' they may argue with them upon the Consequences of their avow'd and declar'd Notions, in order to their Conviction, yet they wont pretend that they are chargeable with them, if they positively disown them, and declare their Abhorrence of them. This is a Sort of Treatment which they

1 Cor. xiii. 5.

Phil. iv. 8.

they will no more give to others, than they could be able to bear it from others without reckoning themselves hardly us'd. They wont at every Turn give People of different Sentiments from them the Title of *Hereticks*, which is provoking, and rather tends to inflame Mens Passions, than convince their Judgments: But will seek to soften and win upon them, and not exasperate them.

I Cor.
xiii. 5.

6. ST. Paul adds, That *Charity seeketh not her own*, & ζῆτεῖ τὰ ἑαυτῆς: It is not selfish. It does not seek Self-Advancement, to the Neglect or Injury, or Diminution of others. Such Persons therefore as *speak the Truth in Love*, will not be of a stingy, narrow, mercenary Spirit, but will be ready to do Good for Evil; and stick at nothing, tho' it be to their own Detriment, that might be to the real Benefit of those whom they have to do with. They wont seek their own Praise, Profit, or Pleasure, to the Hurt of others, any more than they'd be willing to have others do so by them, which is the Measure by which they statedly proceed.

I Cor.
xiii. 5.

7. CHARITY, says the Apostle, *is not easily provoked*; & παροξύνεται; is not apt to be inflam'd, or drawn into unkind Thoughts, Words, or Actions. They therefore that *speak the Truth in Love*, will be of a Forgiving Spirit. They wont easily be inrag'd. They may at some certain Times and in some Cases be disturb'd; but they'l take care not to be furiously transported beyond all Bounds. They'l moderate their Resentments, keep their Anger under Government, and not suffer it to rise to such an Height as they that should lose the Command of themselves, or be hurry'd into any Thing that is outrageous: They wont be exasperated or imbitter'd.
Even

Even when they are *angry*, they'll be careful *not* to *sin*; endeavouring to keep their Tempers even towards their fiercest and most vehement Opposers. Ephes. iv. 26.

8. St. Paul adds, That *Charity thinketh no Evil*; 1 Cor. xiii. 5.
 & λογίζηται τὸ κακὸν : It thinketh ill of none, without Ground, and without Constraint. They therefore that *speak the Truth in Love*, will be ready to pass the best Construction on what Men say, and favourably to interpret what they do. They will lessen rather than aggravate any thing that is ill, and carefully watch against Jealousies and Suspicions, which are many times as tormenting to those that entertain them, as they are injurious to those against whom they are pointed. No one Thing is more opposite to true Christian Charity, than a detracting censorious Humour, which runs into groundless Surmises, and ill-favour'd Constructions, the encouraging which opens a Door to all manner of Confusion. They that act as Love directs, take Things by the best Handle, and not will allow themselves to suspect Men to be worse in any respect, than their Words and Actions plainly declare them. They wont misconstrue either their Words or Intentions, nor interpret doubtful Things to the worst Sense, but the best; nor surmise an Evil of others, that they do not know, nor take up an evil Report of them lightly, nor contribute to the spreading of it, when it is rais'd by others, without there be just Grounds. They wont impute Evil, or put it to any Man's Account, beyond absolute Necessity. They will be ready to make Allowances, and not harshly interpret what is said by others, as if they were bent upon making the worst of it that is possible: But in this, as well as other Respects, will do as they would be done by.

9. CHARITY,

1 Cor.
xiii. 6.

9. CHARITY, says the Apostle, *rejoyceth not in Iniquity, but rejoyceth in the Truth.* They that *speake the Truth in Love*, will be fadden'd instead of being pleas'd; when even they that are their greatest Opposites do what is really amiss and unjustifiable, or run into any Sort of Extravagance, notwithstanding that this may possibly give them some Advantage in their dealing with them. But any right Steps, any Approaches towards Truth that can be discover'd, are most highly grateful to them; and they'll shew that they are so, by making the most of them that is possible. Such Persons instead of watching for their Neighbours halting, and making the most of their Miscarriages, will be troubled at any Disgrace they fall under: And will be apt to take Pleasure in every Thing they say or do, that is well, and as it should be, and be rejoic'd if Truth gets any Ground, or Prejudices against it are at all abated, even tho' it should be to their own Diminution.

1 Cor.
xiii. 7.

10. St. Paul adds, *That Charity beareth all Things: πάντα σέβει*: It covers all Things, as far as is possible. They that *speake the Truth in Love*, will rather throw a Veil over Mens Faults to keep them out of sight, than make them worse than they really are. They'll readily commend what is truly commendable in them, and give them the most favorable Characters they are capable of doing, consistently with Truth and Justice. The Wise Man says, that *Hatred stirreth up Strifes, but Love covereth all Sins.* Whereas Ill-will and Hatred raises up Disturbance where all things are quiet, and makes Men quarrel about Trifles; Love will pacify the minds of such as it finds provok'd by real Offences, and compose Differences

Prov. x.
21.

ferences for which perhaps there were but too much Occasion. Love will most certainly bear with a Multitude of Infirmities ; and that the rather, because they that are the most charitable, are very sensible that in some Things they themselves need Allowances, and should be expos'd, were they to be rigorously dealt withal, on the account of sudden Sallies, and hasty Speeches, and Indiscretions, which after the utmost Caution, they may be guilty of e'er they are aware.

II. CHARITY, says the Apostle, *believeth all Things, hopeth all Things.* They that *speaking the Truth in Love*, will believe well of all Men, till they are forc'd to the contrary by credible evidence ; and they'll hope well too, as far as they can discover the least ground for it. They'll believe well of others if they have but the least probable ground to go upon and hope for more from them than they have any positive reason to believe. They wont intrench upon God's Province, and pretend to judge Mens Hearts, or pry into their Secret conceal'd intentions, but will believe well, as long as there is the least room for it, and their Hopes will go yet farther than their Belief, because they will be as unwilling to give others up for irrecoverable, as they would have their Neighbours be to pass such a Judgment upon them, if they were in like Circumstances. Let others be never so bad, they wont absolutely despair of their amendment, nor give over using proper means in order to it. They are *easy to be intreated*. We may remember that St. Paul was very far from being sensible of the strange and peculiar hardness and stupidity of the *Jews* with whom he had to do, yet he did not give over dealing with them, as if their Case was absolutely hopeless ; but he declar'd he

1 Cor.
iii. 7.

Jam. iii.
17.

Rom. xi.

would still do his utmost, to *provoke to Emulation* them that were his *Flesh*, that he might save some of them. We should endeavour to be like him in our Carriage towards those whom we find ourselves in Duty bound to oppose, as we are standing up for God's Truth; especially where their Spirits having been sown'd by ill usage, their Corruption may have been drawn forth to a Degree beyond what is common and usual.

1 Cor.
xiii. 7.

12 and *Lastly*, St. Paul farther adds, That *Charity endureth all things*. It wont be easily tir'd out. It will be unwearied in its Endeavours, and will surmount all Difficulties and Opposition. It will not seek delays, or take pleasure in Excuses, but will find Ways to vent it self, tho' there may be many Things to discourage and obstruct it. They that *speak the Truth in Love*, will endure a great many ill Things from those that set themselves against them, in hope of better Things hereafter; and will put up Wrongs, without any inclination to revenge them. They'l much rather *give place unto Wrath*. They'l think often of their Great Master, who without flinching or weariness endur'd the contradiction of Sinners against himself, till He had quite gone thro' the great Work he had undertaken: And in like manner they also will hold on bearing and forbearing, even to the End of their Course, without any more desiring to be excus'd from this, than from any other part of their prescribed Work and Service.

Rom. xiii.
19.

HAVING thus his set before you this truly Noble and Scriptural, and Apostolical Description of Charity, in its several Parts and Branches, I think I have good reason to move and insist upon it, that it may be seriously consider'd of, and that it may abide in your
Thoughts,

Thoughts, and be copied out in your Tempers and Practice. I beseech you Brethren, dont look upon the Grace describ'd as a Thing indifferent, or barely ornamental, but as highly necessary. Don't plead for, don't offer to extenuate or excuse any Defects here, any more than you would as to any other Grace, which our Sacred Records recommend with the greatest earnestness. I readily grant it is difficult to get, and keep, and maintain, such a Spirit as that describ'd ; but that is rather a sign of its peculiar Excellence, than any thing of a Proof that it would not highly become us, and be necessary for us, earnestly to strive for it, and labour after it, and heartily to lament our defectiveness in it. I can freely appeal to all of you that hear me, whether the Spirit describ'd be not exceeding amiable, and whether it is not just Matter of Grief and Sorrow that it should be so uncommon, and whether it would not be happy for the World in general, and the Church of God in particular, if it did but prevail ; and whether our Animositys and Contentions would not be very much abated, and Things would not appear with a quite different Face from what they do at this Day, could but Persons be content, and were they but dispos'd and inclin'd, thus to speak the Truth in Love.

III. To come therefore to the Motives that should induce us to maintain this Love, as we are pursuing Truth ; waving many others, I shall only touch upon these two, which I take to be of great Weight : *viz.* that this will be much for our own Advantage, and at the same Time it will be the very best Way we can take to do Service to the Truth which we stand up for.

- I. OUR thus *speaking the Truth in Love*, will be very much for our own Advantage. The Apostle tells us, That *Charity is the Bond of Perfectness*, and therefore presses us *above all Things* to put it on: By which he plainly intimates to us, that as a generous and extensive Love is a grand Lesson which Christianity teaches, and a Grace which it particularly inforces, so is it one of the most excellent of Christian Graces: all others without it being unprofitable, and but vain and false Paintings, that have nothing in them that is firm and solid, or that will turn to any Account in the final Issue. And therefore we are told, That *Love is the fulfilling of the Law*: And it is so most certainly, as to the Second Table of it, which relates to our Neighbours. St. Peter also in his List of Christian Vertues and Graces, which he enumerates particularly, declaring the Necessity of adding one of them to another, fixes *Charity* at the Top, and mentions it last of all; thereby intimating to us, That if *Charity* was but carefully added to all the other Graces mention'd, it would make that we should be neither barren nor unfruitful in the Knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ; and help so to preserve us, as that we should never fall. Without this indeed our Christianity is a meer Pretence; and *Faith* itself is *nothing*: But if this be carefully minded, and conscientiously practis'd, our Religion answers its End, and it will appear with a Lustre. We shall recommend it to others, instead of prejudicing them against it. This Way also shall we have a good Evidence of our own Sincerity. For this will shew that we are like minded with CHRIST, and acted by his Spirit. Let this Mind, says the Apostle, be in you
- Col.iii.14.
- Rom.xiii.10.
- 2 Pet.i.7.
- Ver. 8.
- Ver. 10.
- 1 Cor. xiii. 2.
- Phil.ii.5.

yon, which was also in Christ Jesus: And he was therein a particular Reference to Love, Humility, and Lowliness of Mind, as any Man will easily discern that consults the Context. Our Blessed Lord JESUS ever spake and publish'd the Truth, and 'twas his constant Business so to do: But he always did it in Love. Our doing the same, will be a plain Proof and Evidence that the same Spirit is in us, as was in him. For *Love is a* Gal. v. 22. *Fruit of the Spirit of CHRIST*; and of his producing and cherishing. 'Tis a good Token and Evidence of being his Disciples indeed, and intitled to those Blessings which belong to those that are so. This therefore cannot but be a great and unspeakable Comfort upon Reflection. Besides, this will also be a good Means of our own Growth, and Stability, and advance towards Maturity. 'Twill keep us from Wavering, and being Inconstant, like Children that are toss'd to and fro, and know not what to stick to. *Knowledge* puffed up, but *Charity edifieth*. It not only con- sults and promotes the Edification of others, but it edifies those in whom it prevails and thrives. The Prevalence of true Christian Love in our Hearts, will do us more real good, than the greatest Knowledge, or any other Attainment can do without it. And this methinks ought very much to recommend it to us. And then withall,

1 Cor.
viii. 1.

2. OUR speaking the Truth in Love, will also be the very best way we can take to do Service to the Truth which we stand up for, and would willingly support and defend. All Men of Sense must needs agree, that a cool Spirit is in a much fairer way to make Profelytes than a fierce one. Tho' it be Truth that a Man appears for

for, if yet he does it in a wrathful Way, and runs into angry Reflections and fierce Debates, he will much sooner prejudice than persuade Persons of different Sentiments. *The Wrath of Man worketh not the Righteousness of God.* It never did, nor it never will. And this I think may very well be laid down as a Principle, by all that deal with Gainsayers upon a Religious Argument. 'Tis not fierce Opposition and Contention, but soft Words, and mild and sober Reasoning, that makes Way for Truth in the Mind, and bears in Light, and lays a Foundation for Conviction. When the Word came to the Prophet *Elijah*, 'tis observ'd, That *the Lord was not in the Wind, nor in the Earthquake, nor in the Fire, but in the still Voice.* Those were but boisterous Harbingers of a meek and still Word. GOD gives the clearest and most advantageous Notices of himself in Sweetness; and therefore we should not wonder that that is the best Way for us to convey Truth to our Fellow-Creatures, and make suitable Impressions upon 'em. If you deal boisterously with them, they'll be apt to suspect that you rather design to expose and insult them, or domineer over them, than convince them of real Truth. If we consider human Nature, or consult our own make, or look to the Experience of Ages past, we shall easily be convinc'd of this. Were we to study ever so long, how to spread and promote Truth, and make Converts to it, we could pitch upon no Method so effectual as the *speaking it in Love*: And therefore we shall disserve Truth, as well as cross our own real Interest, if we do not comply with the Admonition in the Text: Which are Considerations so important, as to make any farther Motives needless.

BUT

BUT tho' (my Friends I would gladly have the whole Scheme of Gospel-Truth held and maintain'd, and spoken and defended in Love, and am particularly desirous it should be so as to the Doctrine of the TRINITY which runs through it (on which I have so largely insisted;) and tho' I can safely say that I would not stick at any Thing that in me lay, that I could discern would contribute towards it, yet would I not be understood, nor was it in the least, my Intention or Design, to charge, or bring in Inditements agninst, any of my Brethren. We have what is abundantly sufficient, we have enow in all Conscience to expose and weaken us; we need not weaken and bespatter one another. I leave it to every Mans own Thoughts to charge him, as far as he has offer'd any Violence to that Love which he ought to have discover'd in all his Searches after Truth, Debates about it, or Methods taken to support it. I have only endeavour'd to take Pattern from St. Paul, who finding the Christians of *Corinth*, for whom he had a most tender Concern, very differently dispos'd from what they should have been, through Divisions and Jealousies, sets freely before them the true and genuine Offices, Properties, and Fruits of Charity, and leaves it to them from thence to recollect their own Miscarriages. It has been my Aim to do the very same by myself and you, in order to close and serious Thoughts about the Matter propos'd, which is really of no small Concern and Consequence. And I must confess I am afraid if we make any Thing of a strict Review and deal impartially; and if we lay our Hands pon our Hearts, and are ingenuous, we shall all of us see Cause to own we are guilty of neglect-
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ing that Love and Charity of which we ought to have been mindful, in all our Discourses and Debates, and the whole of our Conduct and Management.

AFTER what has been advanc'd, my Brethren must give me leave to say, that we ought not to reckon it enough that we have Truth on our Side, unless we have spoken it and adher'd to it, and endeavour'd to support and defend it in Love. It will be but a poor Relief, in such a Case as this, to go to throw the blame off from ourselves upon others: For they may have been guilty and we too; and we may be assur'd their Fault will not excuse or lessen ours. For my own Part I shall not stick to declare, that if in any of those Discourses in which I have, with some Pains, been searching for Truth upon the Head of the TRINITY, I have broken in upon the Love that was owing to any that I have pointed to, I am far from justifying myself; I am truly sorry for it; and shall endeavour to correct it: And I cannot but hope that others will do so too, as to what they upon Reflection may discern to have been amiss: And then tho' after our utmost Pains and Care, we might not perhaps be all of one Mind, even in some Things that are of Moment, we yet might differ amicably, which I should think would be no small Happiness, and prove a considerable Comfort to all the Hearty Lovers of serious Religion among Us.

It now only remains, that we Consider,

IV. How that Love which I have been recommending and pressing, may be reconcil'd with that Zeal for Truth, which is often urg'd upon us as our Duty. For the Premises being consider'd, I doubt

doubt not but some will be ready to say, what would you have us do? Must we out of a regard to Charity embrace those in our Bosoms, who subvert the main Foundations of our Holy Religion? Must we give them an Opportunity of undermining and overthrowing the Capital Articles of our Faith, that we may shew our Love? Are we not earnestly *Jude i. 3.* to contend for the Faith once deliver'd unto the Saints, and is not that press'd as a Duty of mighty Consequence? Why then should you take Pains to slacken our Zeal?

I answer, I am far from aiming at discouraging Christian Zeal, tho' I think it highly concerns us to get our Zeal rightly temper'd, that it may not do more Hurt than Good. All that I move for is, that St. Paul's Admonition in the Text, of *Speaking the Truth in Love*, may not be forgotten in the Heat of Zeal. And this Charge of his, may I conceive be comply'd with, without giving such as hesitate about the Truth, or oppose it, the least Advantage against it; and without breaking in upon that Zeal with which I readily grant we ought to contend for it. And here I have a few Things to offer, that deserve to be well consider'd, and were worthy to have been enlarg'd on.

I. THERE'S a great deal of Difference between being against the Truth, and demurring upon some Phrases and Expressions that have been commonly us'd by the Asserters of that Truth: And it is but a blind Zeal that will not or cannot allow of a Distinction between these two. For my own Part, I have not the least scruple as to any of the Words or Expressions that have been generally made use of in the Christian Church, and particularly among the Reformed, upon the Head of the TRINITY. I never
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yet

yet could see any just Reason to dislike the Principle, in which I was train'd up from my Childhood, That there are Three Persons in the Godhead, the same in Substance, equal in Power and Glory. And yet suppose I meet with some that are not so free for the use of the Word *Person*, when apply'd to Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and that declare they are at a loss for the meaning of the Word *Substance* when it is apply'd to the Deity, tho' yet they own themselves devoted to Father, Son, and Spirit; and acknowledge that it is by the Spirit enabling, and through the Son encouraging, that they apply to, and depend upon the Father as finally and fully effecting all Good *; I cannot see any Reason, why our Zeal should carry us so far, as to reject them, or exclude them our Love. Should any condemn such, and cast them off, as far as I can judge, their Zeal would not be according to Knowledge. For is not the main Substance of a Truth, of a great deal more Significance and Importance, than any particular Words, Phrases or Expressions that Men have devis'd, with ever so honest an Intention to do it Service? Perhaps it may be said, and I know it has been said often, that it is not only a Piece of needless Scrupulosity, to be shy of such Words and Expressions as the most faithful and eminent Servants of God have ordinarily made use of in such a Case, but it seems to look as if they that were against such Words and Expressions, were really against the Truth itself, in whose Service they have long been us'd; and that Experience often proves

Rom x. 2.

* See Dr. Oldfield's Brief, Practical, and Pacifick Discourse, of God; and of the Father, Son, and Spirit; and of our Concern with them: Lately publish'd.

as much: And that therefore we must guard our Out-works, if we'd secure our Fort. But if these are Out-works, they are of Man's erecting: And shall we then for their Sake, and upon their Account, reject those who frankly assure us, they admit whatever God has rear'd up in Scripture, whom in Charity we are bound to believe, till we can prove the contrary, from somewhat that is plainly inconsistent with such a Profession? Would not this, Interpretatively, be a preferring Mans Provision to secure the Truth, to God's, as if we were wiser than he? And if it is liable to be so interpreted, would not this be such a Sort of Zeal as would make work for Repentance, instead of doing Truth any real Service, and procuring Christianity any Credit?

2. It deserves also to be consider'd, that St. Paul himself has plainly told us that there are *foolish Questions that gender Strifes*, that are to be avoided.

2 Tim. ii. 23.

What ever particular Questions the Apostle might in that Passage have in his Eye, 'tis to me very plain, that there are several such Questions, particularly upon the Head of the Trinity: As about the manner of the Generation of the Son, and the Procession of the Holy Ghost, and the way of their being in one another mutually, and the manner of their Distinction from each other. Questions of this nature I take to be both *foolish and unlearned*: For they are about things that are beyond our Capacity, and which we can have no Notion of, because God has not revealed them; and the Notions vented concerning them are at best but unprofitable Curiosities; they have nothing of *Union* in them: And at the same time they tend to *Strife and Debates*, and produce Parties and Distances, which breed Confusion. And yet these

are things, about which some have been, and yet may be, wonderful zealous. But should any be for turning their Notions about such things as these, into Articles of Faith, and make them Tests of Orthodoxy, I shan't stick to say it would be a Preposterous, and unscriptural Zeal, and be far from any way promoting Practical Godliness. The way the Scripture has mark'd out for us in things of this kind, is to leave Persons free, and at their Liberty, without pretending to limit or prescribe to them. These are things in which the Truth as God has revealed it, as far as I can perceive, has no Concern: And therefore for Zeal here to juggle out Love, would be to disregard what God has expressly commanded, out of a tenderness for somewhat that he has manifestly discourag'd, and order'd to be avoided. The same Apostle has indeed told us, that *it is good to be always zealously affected in a good thing*; i. e. in things that are good in themselves, and that tend to make either ourselves or others better. But as for such things as those mention'd, they are far from having any intrinsic Goodness in them; and nothing can be produc'd in proof that they have the least Tendency to do good to those that are ever so warmly concern'd about them: Nay they rather tend to divert People from such things as would improve them, both as to their Tempers and their Lives.

Gal. iv.
18.

I cannot here forbear recollecting a Passage of a Learned Man, about the time of the Reformation, which I take to have a greatdeal of Truth in it, and to be much to the purpose. " We (says he) are contending without end, what it is that distinguishes the Father from the Son, and both from the Holy Spirit; whether it be a Thing, or a Relation; and how it can be that they can be said to be Three, of which

Erasm.
Roterod.
in 1 Tim.
i. 6,

“ which one is not the other, when they are but
 “ one in Essence? How much more (says he,) to
 “ the Purpose would it be for us to take all possi-
 “ ble Care piously and holily to worship and adore
 “ this TRINITY, whose MAJESTY we are unable
 “ to pry into, and to express the ineffable Con-
 “ cord of that, by our Concord among ourselves,
 “ that so we may in Time come to be in Partner-
 “ ship with them.

To be hasty in condemning such as cannot speak
 of the Mystery of the Sacred Three in all Respects
 as we may think we may do very safely and allow-
 ably, especially when we take in Speculations as to the
 way and manner, where God has reveal'd Things
 to us only in the general, tho' it may be called an
 Act of Zeal, yet is it no Part of the being *zealous*
of good Works, the bringing us to which is represen-
 ted as a main Design of our Redemption. It is
 rather a being wise and zealous, *above that which is*
written. But 'tis fit we should also consider,

Tic. ii
14.

1 Cor.
iv. 6.

3. THAT where any do fall into Error, there is a
 Difference to be made between the erring Persons
 and their Errors. Tho' Errors are far from being
 all alike, yet Errors in Matters of Moment may be
 freely declar'd against; while yet the erring Persons
 may in many Cases be tenderly dealt with, with-
 out any Diminution of that Zeal for the Faith
 which the Word of God hath made our Duty.
 Among erring Persons, there may be several hearty
 Lovers of Truth, who yet are not so happy as to
 find it, who would detest their own Errors, if they
 did not take them for Truths. To run down all
 such without distinction, and condemn them in the
 Lump, may be called Zeal, but 'tis no Zeal of God's
 requiring, for the supporting any Truth of his reveal-
 ing.

2 Tim.
ii. 25, 26.

ing. His way that he hath mark'd out in his word is plainly this, (as has before been hinted) *in meekness to instruct such as oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them Repentance, to the acknowledging not the truth, that they may recover themselves out of the Snare of the Devil.* A Minister of the Gospel may do his Duty towards supporting the Truth, by Declaring in the Course and Exercise of his Ministry, against such Errors as are spread and propagated; but in the mean Time he ought to be mild and gentle in his carriage towards them that hold them, and so manage himself as to shew that he Loves their Persons, while he hates their Errors, and that his Design is to amend but not provoke them. Without this, his Endeavours in favour of the Truth will be but Labour in Vain: His Zeal will answer no End, because of its being manifest that it rather aims at Revenge than Correction. But farther,

4. THO' we are its true, to contend earnestly for the Truth, yet ought we to be satisfy'd with that way of doing it that God has prescrib'd, if we desire or hope to approve ourselves to him. We are to contend by Reason and Argument, and not by Force and Violence at any time; nor by rejecting and casting off, till the Case is evidently remediless. One that is in doubt about the Truth, is not to be treated like one harden'd in Errour: Nor are any to be wholly cast off, till they have given good Proof they are irreclaimable. Certainly we may learn something from our Lord's being against *gathering up the Tares, lest we should root up also the Wheat with them.* Why should we offer to reject any of those, whom for any thing we know God may accept? He has join'd Truth and Love together in my Text, and Faith and Love together in Christ Jesus elsewhere: And nothing requir'd

Luke.
xiii. 29

2 Tim.
i. 13.

requir'd of us upon the Head of Zeal, should put us upon separating them, or disturbing this Harmony, which is so desireable in itself, and so ornamental to Christianity.

THE severest Passage I can remember, is what : John. we meet with in St. John, in these Words: *If there X. 11, come any one unto you, and bring not this Doctrine, that is the Doctrine of CHRIST, mention'd in the Verse before, receive him not into your House, neither bid him God speed. For he that biddeth him God speed, is Partaker of his Evil Deeds.* From which strict Apostolical Charge we may justly gather, that heretofore upon Apostatizing from Christianity to Judaism, familiarities were to cease. And by a Parity of Reason we may also conclude, that should any in our Time arrive at that height of Malignity as to pour contempt on CHRIST and his Doctrine, we ought to be cautious of keeping up familiarity with them, and do nothing that may be fairly interpreted a justifying them in, Consenting to, or Approving of, their Evil Principles or Actions, least we should be involv'd in their Guilt by Participation. But I cannot perceive that it from hence follows but that we may very warrantably exercise Humanity to the very worst of such when they are in Distress; nay I cannot see but it still must be our Duty to have Compassion upon them, and Pity and Pray for them, tho' they are ever so bitter Enemies of the Truth. Let them ever so Positively or vehemently deny any of the Essentials of Christianity, tho' we ought to take care to do nothing to favour or encourage them in their ill designs, yet as far as I am able to judge, we may sufficiently shew our Zeal by discountenancing them, without knocking them on the Head, committing them to the flames, or denying them Offices of Humanity: Nay I must

own I am firmly of Opinion, that the Love we are to join with Truth obliges us, to do them any real Good we can.

SEDUCERS were not in the times of the Apostles, to be receiv'd as the Disciples of CHRIST were to be receiv'd; nor were they to be wish'd Success in their undertakings; but in other respects they were still to be well us'd, and share in various Instances of Love, consistently with all that regard for Truth that was due, from those that were most Hearty in its Interests.

BUT I cannot conclude without observing, how Common it has been in the Christian World, for Persons out of a Preposterous Zeal, or a desire of Dominion, or even a vain fear of giving way to innovations in Religion, to inveigh against others with bitter Hatred, and disown them as Brethren, upon slight occasions. Ever since the *Western* fell out with the *Eastern* Church about the day of keeping *Easter*, to that Degree as to Anathematize them, has this uncharitable Temper strangely prevail'd, tho' it has been really unaccountable.

WHEN a Gangrene seizes any part of our Bodies, 'tis agreed that necessity requires it should be cut off without Pity, lest the Malady should spread farther, and prove Mortal. But suppose there should be any little swelling or Protuberance in the outer Skin, or a sore that is not deep, and hinders not the Spirits from flowing down to the Part affected, for any one presently to be for dismembring, would be rather to act the part of an Executioner than a skilful Surgeon.

The Good Lord guide us all in the ways of Truth and Love.

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